

REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 10 July 2013

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	A Brighouse (Chair)	
	Councillors	S Foulkes S Williams E Boulton J Crabtree P Doughty G Ellis R Gregson	M Johnston P Kearney A Leech D Realey M Sullivan KJ Williams
<u>Cabinet Members:</u>	Councillors	G Davies P Hackett B Kenny	

1 INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME

The Chair welcomed all who were present and provided a brief outline as to how he expected meetings of the Committee to be conducted. He commented that the Committee would have a considerable workload and he expected that agendas would be small and focused upon the key issues to be identified by Members for inclusion in the work programme.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Members were reminded that they should also declare whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

No such declarations were made.

3 MINUTES

The Head of Legal and Member Services presented the minutes of the Sustainable Communities and Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committees, whose terms of reference now fell largely within the remit of this Committee.

Members referred to a number of matters from those meetings and requested an update from officers, in relation to a contract awarded for Cheshire Lines Facilities Management; and the Wirral Approved Trader Scheme. (Sustainable Communities (12 March 2013) minutes 74 and 75 refer).

The Head of Environment and Regulation agreed to provide an update in relation to each matter to Members direct.

Resolved – That, subject to the provision of update reports as requested, the minutes of the Sustainable Communities O&S Committee held on 12 March 2013 and the Economy and Regeneration O&S Committee held on 22 April 2013, be approved.

4 **TERMS OF REFERENCE AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

The Director of Public Health/Head of Policy and Performance presented the Terms of Reference of the Policy and Performance Committees, as set out in Article 6 of the Council's Constitution, which had recently been revised and updated in response to the need to improve the Council's corporate governance and decision making. The report also highlighted the specific Service Areas which fell within the remit of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee and the Director indicated that greater detail was provided in the Scrutiny Briefing Pack that had been circulated to Members (see minute 5 post) –

Environment and Regulation

- Waste & Environment
- Parks & Countryside
- Highways Management
- Traffic & Transport
- Regulation
- Trading Standards
- Environmental Health
- Waste & Environment

Housing and Community Safety

- Housing Strategy
- Housing Renewal, including Private Sector Housing
- Supporting People
- Community Safety

Regeneration

- Regeneration & Economic Development
- Business Support
- Town Centres
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Planning
- Building Control
- Cultural Services

Tourism

The Chair indicated that, in order for the Committee to work effectively, there would be a need for a significant amount of scrutiny work to be undertaken by Members outside the Committee either by way of individual investigation to be reported back to the Committee, or by targeted task and finish groups with a specific remit and able to focus on detail, in order to get to the heart of the Committees brief.

Resolved – That the Committee's Terms of Reference and specific Areas of Responsibility, be noted.

5 **BRIEFING PACK**

For ease of reference, the Director of Public Health/Head of Policy and Performance presented the comprehensive Scrutiny Briefing Pack, which had been prepared for the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee and had

previously been circulated to Members. It provided a summary of the purpose of overview and scrutiny and contained detail in relation to the relevant service areas.

The document provided an outline of the outstanding items from previous scrutiny committees and indicated the key plans and strategies and key policy drivers of relevance to the work of the Committees.

Resolved – That the Briefing Pack be noted.

6 **MEETING PROCEDURE RULES**

Director of Public Health/Head of Policy and Performance presented the Policy and Performance Committee Meeting Procedure Rules, under which the formal meetings of the Committee should be undertaken. The Coordinating Committee was responsible for determining the overview and scrutiny rules and operational protocols and at its meeting held on 3 July 2013 (minute 11 refers) an amendment was proposed to the procedure rules. As a result, they would be revised and re-circulated to Members, to reflect the views expressed by the Coordinating Committee.

The Chair commented also that at the Coordinating Committee, it was proposed that at future meetings of Policy and Performance Committees, Members should not sit in party groups, so as to avoid adversarial politics in the scrutiny function. However, the proposal was not intended to be prescriptive, but to promote improved cross-party working and to reignite scrutiny in Wirral.

Members agreed to the need to raise the profile of scrutiny, in order to have a positive influence on the Cabinet and to provide an effective and informed challenge, where necessary. Key to this however was to ensure that the work undertaken by scrutiny was meaningful and that it was progressed and acted upon. In response to questions from Members in relation to the budget available to the Policy and Performance Committees, the Scrutiny Support Officer indicated that, although there was not a specific budget allocation, requests for funding associated with scrutiny work would be considered on a case by case basis.

Resolved – That the report and the Procedure Rules be noted.

7 **REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE - PLAN**

The Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment presented the Directorate Plan for 2013/2014, which provided an explanation of the critical key role of the Directorate in the delivery of a number of key strategies and services, which were central to the Council's successful achievement of its Corporate Plan priorities. In addition, further important day to day activities of the Directorate were included in the Service Plans for each service area and were the responsibility of the Heads of Service.

The local environment and economy were amongst the most important factors in driving the quality of life, health and levels of achievement for Wirral residents and services were focused on ensuring that Wirral was a place where businesses flourished and people had access to jobs. To achieve this, the Directorate was committed to supporting business growth and maintaining and developing improvements to our transport system, which was crucial to a successful and growing economy.

Work with partners was being undertaken in communities to address crime and anti-social behaviour and the Plan outlined the eclectic range of services within the Directorate that increasingly were being carried out in various partnership or collaborative arrangements with other public agencies or volunteer/community

groups. There was a clear need to manage demand and public expectation of what the Council was and was not able to do, faced with a period of unprecedented austerity and change. It was therefore crucial that actions and limited resources were channelled to those areas where maximum sustainable benefits could be delivered.

Each of the Heads of Service indicated the Directorates key priority areas that were included in the Plan document and highlighted what was going to be delivered in 2013/2014. The Plan included an analysis of how the Directorate budget delivered the Corporate Plan priorities, together with the Directorate Risk Register and workforce monitor. In response to a comment from a Member regarding risk assessment scoring, the Head of Regeneration proposed to circulate an explanation of the methodology to all Members of the Committee. He assured Members that the risk register was a live document and that updates to it in relation to any risks that escalated would be brought to the attention of the relevant Policy and Performance Committee Members, as they were to the Cabinet.

With regard to the Desired Direction of Travel indicator, the Head of Environment and Regulation accepted comments from Members that it was, in the main, self evident. However, the information was included for clarity, in the light of a number of changes to the way information now had to be measured and reported. In response to a specific enquiry from a Member with regard to issues associated with the use of PDAs in the brown bin collection, officers indicated that although no such concerns had previously come to light, the matter would be investigated and a note would be provided to Members direct.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

8 REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE - PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD AND BUDGET MONITORING

The Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment presented the Directorate Plan Draft Performance Management Report (Performance Dashboard) to support the delivery of the Directorate Improvement Plan for 2013/2014. It translated the priorities set out in the Plan into a coherent set of performance outcome measures and targets that would be used to evaluate the achievement of the priorities outlined in the Plan over the next year.

The Head of Housing and Community Safety commented that the Directorate Plan linked directly to the Corporate Plan and the key indicators contained within it formed a hierarchy underneath the high level indicators specified in the Corporate Plan that was to be considered by the Council in July. In response to a question from the Chair, he indicated that the Dashboard document would be presented to each meeting of the Committee and that it would also be available for inspection on the Council's intranet. Should Members wish to delve deeper in relation to any specific item, additional background information could be provided. In response to comments in relation to seasonal fluctuations, the Scrutiny Support Officer agreed to provide to Members further information to highlight where in the year, fluctuations were expected to occur.

In response to a specific question in relation to the targets for jobs created and safeguarded (via Invest Wirral), the Head of Regeneration stated that although the target for 2013/2014 was significantly lower than that for 2012/2013, it was nevertheless challenging and had been arrived at following a detailed analysis of data associated with the economy and indications of growth over the next 12 months. He proposed to provide to Members an analysis of performance against the targets in 2012/2013, together with information as to how targets were set for 2013/2014. He was pleased to report that the target last year had been exceeded and he hoped that the same would be true in 2013/2014.

Following a comment from a Member in relation to affordability of property, the Head of Housing and Community Safety indicated that the definition of affordability was based upon property provided for the social rented sector although, clearly, in the private sector, definitions of affordability would be variable. He proposed to circulate data to Members in relation to the measure of affordability and, in response to further comments he indicated that future Dashboard reporting would remove jargon or provide an explanation of it.

Resolved – That the Performance Dashboard be noted and the information contained within it be used to inform the Committee’s future work programme.

9 DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive/Head of Universal and Infrastructure Services, in accordance with the Approved Scheme of Delegation, upon instances where delegated authority had been used with respect to the appointment of contractors pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 14.4. Whereas the function of Corporate Asset Management was now within his remit, the Assistant Chief Executive/Head of Universal and Infrastructure Services indicated that, in this instance, the delegated authority had been used on behalf of the former Director of Law, HR and Asset Management.

Since the last report to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (minute 76 (12 March 2013) refers) the following tenders had been accepted, all being the lowest/most economically advantageous received –

Project Title	Comprehensive Lift Maintenance Contract 2013-2015
Contract Sum	£21,536.28 per annum
Contractor	Knowsley Lift Services Ltd
Funded from	Law, HR & AM Repairs & Maintenance Revenue

Project Title	Birkenhead Town Hall Power/Lighting
Contract Sum	£77,430.53
Contractor	Cottrell Electrical Services Ltd
Funded from	Capital Reserves

Project Title	Asbestos Surveying & Sampling Schedule of Rates Contract 2013-2016
Contract Sum	0% Increase/Reduction to Base Rates
Contractor	Apec Environmental Ltd
Funded from	Law, HR & AM Repairs & Maintenance Revenue

Project Title	Water Hygiene Risk Assessment & Monitoring 2013-2014
Contract Sum	41.5% Reduction to Base Rates
Contractor	Hertel (UK) Ltd
Funded from	Law, HR & Asset Management PPM

The Head of Environment and Regulation commented that, in future, such reports would be presented to the Coordinating Committee, as the information contained within the report fell within its remit.

Resolved – That the report be noted and referred to the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

10 HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL - MINUTES

The Head of Legal and Member Services presented the minutes of the meeting of the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel held on 13 June 2013.

The Panel had considered –

- Objections to the revocation of a Traffic Regulation Order, the effect of which would be to dispose of the car park in Manor Road, Wallasey.
- Objections to proposals to introduce a toucan crossing on Bridge Road, West Kirby, near to its junction with Orrysdale Road.
- Objections to proposals to introduce a Kerblin 'Buildout' and an upgrade of the existing pedestrian refuge island on Torrington Road, Liscard, near to its junction with Marlowe Road.

Resolved – That the Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation –

- (i) That the Car Park at Manor Road, Wallasey be retained and the Head of Environment and Regulation be requested to investigate whether the income associated with advertising at the site could be ringfenced to be used to cover maintenance costs.**
- (ii) That the proposed scheme to introduce a toucan crossing on Bridge Street, West Kirby, near to its junction with Orrysdale Road, be approved.**
- (iii) That, in the interest of road safety, the proposed scheme to introduce a pedestrian refuge island with associated tactile crossing points on Torrington Road, Liscard, near to its junction with Marlowe Road, be approved.**

11 HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL - APPOINTMENT

The Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources reported that Standing Order 33 (1) required that Committees should keep the need for panels under review and, in particular, the position must be reviewed at the first meeting of a Committee in each municipal year. He requested that a review be undertaken of the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel and set out its terms of reference. If the Panel was to be retained, the Committee was requested to appoint Members to serve on it in 2013/2014.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel be retained in 2013/2014, with the terms of reference identified.**
- (2) That the following Members be appointed to serve on the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel in 2013/2014 –**

	Members	Deputies
1 Labour	Mike Sullivan	Steve Foulkes Jim Crabtree Paul Doughty Rob Gregson Anita Leech Denise Realey Jerry Williams

1 Conservative

Steve Williams

**Eddie Boulton
Gerry Ellis
Kathryn Hodson
David Elderton
John Hale
Mike Hornby
Lesley Rennie
Cherry Povall**

1 Liberal Democrat

Alan Brighthouse

**Stuart Kelly
Pat Williams
Tom Harney
Phil Gilchrist**

12 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health/Head of Policy and Performance, which indicated that the four Policy and Performance Committees had been established to undertake the work of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function. Each Committee was invited to select items within their remit to be included within their work programme and it was suggested that more effective scrutiny would focus on a small number of the most relevant high priority topics. The Coordinating Committee had an additional role to ensure that there was no duplication between the work of the other Committees and to make sure that resources were available, from both Members and officers, for the work items to be completed in a timely manner. The report outlined various methods of undertaking detailed scrutiny work and envisaged that the work programme would be monitored and updated at Committee meetings throughout the municipal year.

The report listed a number of items from previous Overview and Scrutiny Committees, where Members had requested further scrutiny work to take place by the new Policy and Performance Committees. The Scrutiny Support Officer commented that, as part of developing the new work programme, Members may wish to identify items from the list but, it would be beneficial to carry forward only those most significant items.

Members raised a number of topics they believed should be included in the Committee's work programme for 2013/2014. A Member further highlighted the need for early progress to be made, otherwise there would be no prospect of completing the body of scrutiny work before the year end. Accordingly, the Chair proposed that the party spokespersons should meet in the near future, to agree and prioritise the work programme, in order that work may commence as soon as practicable, prior to the next meeting.

In response to concerns expressed by Members that not all topics identified for scrutiny could be completed by the year end, the Head of Regeneration assured Members that the areas not selected for scrutiny would not be neglected. There was a significant amount of work being undertaken by officers in the areas identified, albeit not scrutiny work, that could inform work by Members and form the basis of update reports to future meetings of the Committee.

Resolved –

- (1) That the following items be referred to the Chair and Spokespersons for consideration for inclusion in the Committees work programme for the 2013/2014 municipal year –**

- **The implication and impact of budget changes**
 - **Benefit Reform and Under Occupation (from the Economy and Regeneration O&S Committee)**
 - **Wirral Waters**
 - **A Scrutiny Review of the positive impact on the local economy of the redevelopment of New Brighton**
 - **A Review of the COLAS Contract**
 - **The Impact of Welfare Reforms on Homelessness**
 - **The impact of the Reduction in Street Cleansing**
 - **Tourism**
 - **The Decline of Small Shopping Areas**
 - **Domestic Violence**
- (2) **That the completion and prioritisation of the work programme be delegated to the Chair, party spokespersons and the independent Member of the Committee, prior to the next meeting.**
- (3) **That the Chair and spokespersons be delegated to agree to the commencement of any specific parts of the work programme prior to the next meeting of the Committee.**
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